SIGURTHARKVITHA EN SKAMMA

The Short Lay of Sigurth

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Guthrunarkvitha I is immediately followed in the *Codex Regius* by a long poem which in the manuscript bears the heading "Sigurtharkvitha," but which is clearly referred to in the prose link between it and *Guthrunarkvitha I* as the "short" Lay of Sigurth. The discrepancy between this reference and the obvious length of the poem has led to many conjectures, but the explanation seems to be that the "long" Sigurth lay, of which the *Brot* is presumably a part, was materially longer even than this poem. The efforts to reduce the "short" Sigurth lay to dimensions which would justify the appellation in comparison with other poems in the collection, either by separating it into two poems or by the rejection of many stanzas as interpolations, have been utterly inconclusive.

Although there are probably several interpolated passages, and indications of omissions are not lacking, the poem as we now have it seems to be a distinct and coherent unit. From the narrative point of view it leaves a good deal to be desired, for the reason that the poet's object was by no means to tell a story, with which his hearers were quite familiar, but to use the narrative simply as the background for vivid and powerful characterization. The lyric element, as Mogk points out, overshadows the epic throughout, and the fact that there are frequent confusions of narrative tradition does not trouble the poet at all.

The material on which the poem was based seems to have existed in both prose and verse form; the poet was almost certainly familiar with some of the other poems in the Eddic collection, with poems which have since been lost, and with the narrative prose traditions which never fully assumed verse form. The fact that he seems to have known and used the *Oddrunargratr*, which can hardly have been composed before 1050, and that in any case he introduces the figure of Oddrun, a relatively late addition to the story, dates the poem as late as the end of the eleventh century, or even the first half of the twelfth. There has been much discussion as to where it was composed, the debate centering chiefly on the reference to glaciers (stanza 8). There is something to be said in favor of Greenland

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as the original home of the poem (cf. introductory note to *Atlakvitha*), but the arguments for Iceland are even stronger; Norway in this case is practically out of the question.

The narrative features of the poem are based on the German rather than the Norse elements of the story (cf. introductory note to *Gripisspo*), but the poet has taken whatever material he wanted without much discrimination as to its source. By the year 1100 the story of Sigurth, with its allied legends, existed through out the North in many

and varied forms, and the poem shows traces of variants of the main story which do not appear elsewhere.

1. Of old did Sigurth | Gjuki seek,
The Volsung young, | in battles victor;
Well he trusted | the brothers twain,
With mighty oaths | among them sworn.

2. A maid they gave him, | and jewels many,
Guthrun the young, | the daughter of Gjuki;
They drank and spake | full many a day,
Sigurth the young | and Gjuki's sons.

3. Thereafter went they | Brynhild to woo,
And so with them | did Sigurth ride,

[1. *Gjuki*: father of the brothers twain, Gunnar and Hogni, and of Guthrun. In this version of the story Sigurth goes straight to the home of the Gjukungs after his victory over the dragon Fafnir, without meeting Brynhild on the way (cf. *Gripisspo*, 13 and note). *Volsung*: Sigurth's grandfather was Volsung; cf. *Fra Dautha Sinfjotla* and note. *Oaths*: regarding the blood-brother hood sworn by Sigurth, Gunnar, and Hogni cf. *Brot*, 18 and note.

3. Brynhild: on the winning of Brynhild by Sigurth in Gunnar's shape cf. *Gripisspo*, 37 and note. The poet here omits details, {footnote p. 422} and in stanzas 32-39 appears a quite different tradition regarding the winning of Brynhild, which I suspect he had in mind throughout the poem.]

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The Volsung young, | in battle valiant,--
Himself would have had her | if all he had seen.

4. The southern hero | his naked sword,
Fair-flashing, let | between them lie;
(Nor would he come | the maid to kiss;)
The Hunnish king | in his arms ne'er held
The maiden he gave | to Gjuki's sons.

5. Ill she had known not | in all her life,
And nought of the sorrows | of men she knew;
Blame she had not, | nor dreamed she should bear it,
But cruel the fates | that among them came.

[4. *Southern hero*: Sigurth, whose Frankish origin is seldom wholly lost sight of in the Norse versions of the story. On the episode of the sword cf. *Gripisspo*, 41 and note. Line 3 may well be an interpolation; both lines 4 and 5 have also been questioned, and some editions combine line 5 with lines 1-3 of stanza 5. *Hunnish king*: Sigurth, who was, of course, not a king of the Huns, but was occasionally so called in the later poems owing to the lack of ethnological distinction made by the Norse poets (cf. *Guthrunarkvitha I*, 24 and note).

5. This stanza may refer, as Gering thinks, merely to the fact that Brynhild lived happy and unsuspecting as Gunnar's wife until the fatal quarrel with Guthrun (cf. *Gripisspo*, 45 and note) revealed to her the deceit whereby she had been won, or it may refer to the version of the story which appears in stanzas 32-39, wherein Brynhild lived happily with Atli, her brother, until he was attacked by Gunnar and Sigurth, and was compelled to give his sister to Gunnar, winning her consent thereto by representing {footnote p. 432} Gunnar as Sigurth, her chosen hero (cf. *Guthrunarkvitha I*, 24 and note). The manuscript marks line 4 as the beginning of a new stanza, and many editors combine it with stanza 6.]

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6. By herself at the end | of day she sat,
And in open words | her heart she uttered:
"I shall Sigurth have, | the hero young,
E'en though within | my arms he die.

7. "The word I have spoken; | soon shall I rue it,
His wife is Guthrun, | and Gunnar's am I;
Ill Norns set for me | long desire."

8. Oft did she go | with grieving heart
On the glacier's ice | at even-tide,
When Guthrun then | to her bed was gone,
And the bedclothes Sigurth | about her laid.

9. " (Now Gjuki's child | to her lover goes,)

[6. Brynhild has now discovered the deceit that has been practised on her. That she had loved Sigurth from the outset (cf. stanza 40) fits well with the version of the story wherein Sigurth meets her before he comes to Gunnar's home (the version not used in this poem), or the one outlined in the note on stanza 5, but does not accord with the story of Sigurth's first meeting Brynhild in Gunnar's form-an added reason for believing that the poet in stanzas 5-6 had in mind the story represented by stanzas 32-39. *The hero*: the manuscript originally had the phrase thus, then corrected it to "though I die," and finally crossed out the correction. Many editions have "I."

7. Perhaps a line is missing after line 3.

8. *Glacier*: a bit of Icelandic (or Greenland) local color.

9. Line 1 does not appear in the manuscript, and is based on {footnote p. 424} a conjecture by Bugge. Some editions add line 2 to stanza 8. The manuscript indicates line 3 as the beginning of a stanza, and some editors assume a gap of two lines after line 4. *Hunnish king*: cf. stanza 4.]

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And the Hunnish king | with his wife is happy;
Joyless I am | and mateless ever,
Till cries from my heavy | heart burst forth."

10. In her wrath to battle | she roused herself:
"Gunnar, now | thou needs must lose
Lands of mine | and me myself,
No joy shall I have | with the hero ever.

11. "Back shall I fare | where first I dwelt,
Among the kin | that come of my race,
To wait there, sleeping | my life away,
If Sigurth's death | thou shalt not dare,
(And best of heroes | thou shalt not be.)

12. "The son shall fare | with his father hence,
And let not long | the wolf-cub live;
Lighter to pay | is the vengeance-price
After the deed | if the son is dead."

13. Sad was Gunnar, | and bowed with grief,
Deep in thought | the whole day through;

[10. *Lands*: Brynhild's wealth again points to the story represented by stanzas 32-39; elsewhere she is not spoken of as bringing wealth to Gunnar.

11. Line 5, or perhaps line 3, may be interpolated.

12. *The son*: the three-year-old son of Sigurth and Guthrun, Sigmund, who was killed at Brynhild's behest.]

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Yet from his heart | it was ever hid
What deed most fitting | he should find,
(Or what thing best | for him should be,
Or if he should seek | the Volsung to slay,
For with mighty longing | Sigurth he loved.)

14. Much he pondered | for many an hour;
Never before | was the wonder known
That a queen should thus | her kingdom leave;
In counsel then | did he Hogni call,
(For him in truest | trust he held.)

15. "More than all | to me is Brynhild,
Buthli's child, | the best of women;
My very life | would I sooner lose
Than yield the love | of yonder maid.

16. "Wilt thou the hero | for wealth betray?

[13. This stanza has been the subject of many conjectural emendations. Some editions assume a gap after line 2, and make a separate stanza of lines 3-7; others mark lines 5-7 as spurious. The stanza seems to have been expanded by repetition. *Grief* (line 1): the manuscript has "wrath," involving a metrical error.

14. Bugge and Gering transfer lines 4-5 to the beginning of stanza 16, on the basis of the *Volsungasaga* paraphrase, and assume a gap of one line after line 3. Line 5, which is in the nature of a stereotyped clause, may well be interpolated.

15. After "Buthli" in line 2 the manuscript has "my brother," apparently a scribal error. In line 4 the manuscript has "wealth" instead of "love," apparently with stanza 10, in mind, but the *Volsungasaga* paraphrase has "love," and many editors have suspected an error.

16. Cf. note on stanza 14. After thus adding lines 4-5 of {footnote p. 426} stanza 14 at the beginning of stanza 16, Gering marks line 4 as probably spurious; others reject both lines 3 and 4 as mere repetitions. *Rhine*: the Rhine, the sands of which traditionally contained gold, was apparently the original home of the treasure of the Nibelungs, converted in the North to Andvari's treasure (cf. *Reginsmol*, 1-9). That greed for Sigurth's wealth was one of the motives for his slaying is indicated likewise in *Guthrunarkvitha I*, 20, and in the German versions of the story.]

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'Twere good to have | the gold of the Rhine,
And all the hoard | in peace to hold,
And waiting fortune | thus to win."

17. Few the words | of Hogni were:
"Us it beseems not | so to do,
To cleave with swords | the oaths we swore,
The oaths we swore | and all our vows.

18. "We know no mightier | men on earth
The while we four | o'er the folk hold sway,
And while the Hunnish | hero lives,
Nor higher kinship | the world doth hold.

19. "If sons we five | shall soon beget,
Great, methinks, | our race shall grow;

[18. *We four*: if line 1 of stanza 19 is spurious, or the reference therein to "five" is a blunder, as may well be the case, then the "four" are Sigurth and the three brothers, Gunnar, Hogni, and Gotthorm. But it may be that the poet had in mind a tradition which, as in the *Thithrekssaga*, gave Gjuki a fourth son, in which case the "four" refers only to the four Gjukungs. *Hunnish hero*: Sigurth; cf. stanza 4 and note. Some editions put line 4 between lines 1 and 2. Some add lines 1-2 of stanza 19 to stanza 18, marking them as spurious.

19. *We five*: see note on preceding stanza. Some editors mark {footnote p. 427} lines 1-2 as spurious, and either assume a gap of two lines after line 4 or combine lines 5-4 with stanza 20. *Whence lead the ways*: a proverbial expression signifying "whence the trouble comes."]

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Well I see | whence lead the ways;
Too bitter far | is Brynhild's hate."

Gunnar spake:
20. "Gotthorm to wrath | we needs must rouse,
Our younger brother, | in rashness blind;
He entered not | in the oaths we swore,
The oaths we swore | and all our vows."

21. It was easy to rouse | the reckless one.
. . . . . .
The sword in the heart | of Sigurth stood.

22. In vengeance the hero | rose in the hall,
And hurled his sword | at the slayer bold;

[20. The manuscript does not name the speaker. *Gotthorm* (the name is variously spelt): half-brother of Gunnar and Hogni (cf. *Hyndluljoth*, 27 and note, and *Brot*, 4 and note). The name is the northern form of Gundomar; a prince of this name is mentioned in the *Lex Burgundionum*, apparently as a brother of Gundahari (Gundicarius). In the *Nibelungenlied* the third brother is called Gernot.

21. No gap is indicated in the manuscript, and many editors combine stanza 21 with stanza 22, but it seems likely that not only two lines, but one or more stanzas in addition, have been lost; cf. *Brot*, 4, and also the detailed account of the slaying of Sigurth in the *Volsungasaga*, wherein, as here, Sigurth is killed in his bed (cf. stanza 24) and not in the forest.

22. Some editions combine lines 3-4 with stanza 23. *Gram*: {footnote p,. 428} Sigurth's sword (cf. *Reginsmol*, prose after stanza 14); the word here, however, may not be a proper name, but may mean "the hero."]

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At Gotthorm flew | the glittering steel
Of Gram full hard | from the hand of the king.

23. The foeman cleft | asunder fell,
Forward hands | and head did sink,
And legs and feet | did backward fall.

24. Guthrun soft | in her bed had slept,
Safe from care | at Sigurth's side;
She woke to find | her joy had fled,
In the blood of the friend | of Freyr she lay.

25. So hard she smote | her hands together
That the hero rose up, | iron-hearted:

"Weep not, Guthrun, | grievous tears,
Bride so young, | for thy brothers live.

26. "Too young, methinks, | is my son as yet,
He cannot flee | from the home of his foes;

[23. A line may well have been lost from this stanza.

24. *Freyr*: if the phrase "the friend of Freyr" means any thing more than "king" (cf. *Rigsthula*, 46 etc.), which I doubt, it has reference to the late tradition that Freyr, and not Othin, was the ancestor of the Volsungs (cf. *Helgakvitha Hundingsbana I*, 57 and note).

25. Müllenhoff thinks this stanza, or at any rate lines 1-2, a later addition based on stanza 29.

26. *My son*: Sigmund; cf. stanza 12 and note, and also *Brot*, 9 and note.]

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Fearful and deadly | the plan they found,
The counsel new | that now they have heeded.

27. "No son will ride, | though seven thou hast,
To the Thing as the son | of their sister rides;
Well I see | who the ill has worked,
On Brynhild alone | lies the blame for all.

28. "Above all men | the maiden loved me,
Yet false to Gunnar | I ne'er was found;
I kept the oaths | and the kinship I swore;
Of his queen the lover | none may call me.

29. In a swoon she sank | when Sigurth died;
So hard she smote | her hands together
That all the cups | in the cupboard rang,
And loud in the courtyard | cried the geese.

30. Then Brynhild, daughter | of Buthli, laughed,
Only once, | with all her heart,
When as she lay | full loud she heard
The grievous wail | of Gjuki's daughter.

[27. Sigurth means that although Guthrun may have seven sons by a later marriage, none of them will equal Sigmund, "son of their (i.e., Gunnar's and Hogni's) sister." *Thing*: council.

28. Sigurth's protestation of guiltlessness fits perfectly with the story of his relations with Brynhild used in this poem, but not, of course, with the alternative version, used in the *Gripisspo* and elsewhere, wherein Sigurth meets Brynhild before he woos her for Gunnar, and they have a daughter, Aslaug.

29. Cf. *Guthrunarkvitha I*, 115.

30. Cf. *Brot*, 10.]

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31. Then Gunnar, monarch | of men, spake forth:
"Thou dost not laugh, | thou lover of hate,
In gladness there, | or for aught of good;
Why has thy face | so white a hue,
Mother of ill? | Foredoomed thou art.

32. "A worthier woman | wouldst thou have been
If before thine eyes | we had Atli slain;
If thy brother's bleeding | body hadst seen
And the bloody wounds | that thou shouldst End."

Brynhild spake:
33. "None mock thee, Gunnar! | thou hast mightily fought,
But thy hatred little | doth Atli heed;
Longer than thou, | methinks, shall he live,
And greater in might | shall he ever remain.

[31. Line 1 may well be a mere expansion of "Gunnar spake." The manuscript marks line 4 as the beginning of a new stanza, and some editions combine lines 4-5 with stanza 32.

32. This stanza, which all editors have accepted as an integral part of the poem, apparently refers to the same story represented by stanzas 37-39, which most editors have (I believe mistakenly) marked as interpolated. As is pointed out in the notes on stanzas 3, 5, 6 and 10, the poet throughout seems to have accepted the version of the story wherein Gunnar and Sigurth besiege Atli, and are bought off by the gift of Atli's sister, Brynhild, to Gunnar as wife, her consent being won by Atli's representation that Gunnar is Sigurth (cf. also *Guthrunarkvitha I*, 24 and note).

33. The manuscript does not name the speaker, and some editions add a first line: "Then Brynhild, daughter | of Buthli, spake."]

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34. "To thee I say, | and thyself thou knowest,
That all these ills | thou didst early shape;
No bonds I knew, | nor sorrow bore,
And wealth I had | in my brother's home.

35. "Never a husband | sought I to have,
Before the Gjukungs | fared to our land;
Three were the kings | on steeds that came,--
Need of their journey | never there was.

36. "To the hero great | my troth I gave
Who gold-decked sat | on Grani's back;
Not like to thine | was the light of his eyes,
(Nor like in form | and face are ye,)
Though kingly both | ye seemed to be.

37. "And so to me | did Atli say
That share in our wealth | I should not have,

[34. Cf. stanza 5.

35. *Three kings*: Gunnar, Hogni, and Sigurth.

36. Some editions place this stanza after stanza 39, on the theory that stanzas 37-39 are interpolated. Line 4, as virtually a repetition of line 3, has generally been marked as spurious. In this version of the winning of Brynhild it appears that Atli pointed out Sigurth as Gunnar, and Brynhild promptly fell in love with the hero whom, as he rode on *Grani* and was decked with some of the spoils taken from Fafnir, she recognized as the dragon's slayer. Thus no change of form between Sigurth and Gunnar was necessary. The oath to marry Gunnar had to be carried out even after Brynhild had discovered the deception.

37. Most editors mark stanzas 37-39 as interpolated, but cf. note on stanza 32. Stanza 37 has been variously emended. Lines 4 and 6 look like interpolated repetitions, but many editors make {footnote p. 432} two stanzas, following the manuscript in beginning a new stanza with line 4. After line I Grundtvig adds: "Son of Buthli, | and brother of mine." After line 6 Bugge adds: "Not thou was it, Gunnar, | who Grani rode, / Though thou my brother | with rings didst buy." Regarding Brynhild's wealth cf. stanza 10 and note.]

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Of gold or lands, | if my hand I gave not;
(More evil yet, | the wealth I should yield,)
The gold that he | in my childhood gave me,
(The wealth from him | in my youth I had.)

38. "Oft in my mind | I pondered much
If still I should fight, | and warriors fell,
Brave in my byrnie, | my brother defying;
That would wide | in the world be known,
And sorrow for many | a man would make.

39. "But the bond at last | I let be made,
For more the hoard | I longed to have,
The rings that the son | of Sigmund won;
No other's treasure | e'er I sought.

40. "One-alone | of all I loved,
Nor changing heart | I ever had;
All in the end | shall Atli know,

[38. Brynhild here again appears as a Valkyrie. The manuscript marks line 4 as the beginning of a new stanza. Any one of the last three lines may be spurious.

39. Some editions combine this stanza with lines 4-5 of stanza 38, with lines 1-2 of stanza 40, or with the whole of stanza 40. *The bond*: Brynhild thought she was marrying Sigurth, owner of the treasure, whereas she was being tricked into marrying Gunnar.]

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When he hears I have gone | on the death-road hence."

* * * * * *

41. "Never a wife | of fickle will
Yet to another | man should yield.
. . . . . .
So vengence for all | my ills shall come."

42, Up rose Gunnar, | the people's ruler,
And flung his arms | round her neck so fair;
And all who came, | of every kind,
Sought to hold her | with all their hearts.

43. But back she cast | all those who came,
Nor from the long road | let them hold her;

[41. At this point there seem to be several emissions. Brynhild's statement in lines 1-2 seems to refer to the episode, not here mentioned but told in detail in the *Volsungasaga*, of Sigurth's effort to repair the wrong that has been done her by himself giving up Guthrun in her favor, an offer which she refuses. The lacuna here suggested, which is not indicated in the manuscript, may be simply a single line (line 1) or a stanza or more. After line 2 there is almost certainly a gap of at least one stanza, and possibly more, in which Brynhild states her determination to die.

42. Hardly any two editions agree as to the arrangement of the lines in stanzas 42-44. I have followed the manuscript except in transposing line 4 of stanza 43 to this position from the place it holds in the manuscript after line 4 of stanza 14. All the other involve the rejection of two or more lines as spurious and the assumption of various gaps. Gering and Sijmons both arrange the lines thus: 42, 1-2; two-line gap; 43, 3 {footnote p. 434} (marked probably spurious); 44, 1-4; 43-4 (marked probably spurious); 42, 3-4; 43, 1-2.]

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In counsel then | did he Hogni call:
"Of wisdom now | full great is our need.

44. "Let the warriors here | in the hall come forth,
Thine and mine, | for the need is mighty,
If haply the queen | from death they may hold,
Till her fearful thoughts | with time shall fade."

45. (Few the words | of Hogni were:)
"From the long road now | shall ye hold her not,
That born again | she may never be!
Foul she came | from her mother forth,
And born she was | for wicked deeds,
(Sorrow to many | a man to bring.)"

46. From the speaker gloomily | Gunnar turned,
For the jewel-bearer | her gems was dividing;

[43. Cf. note on preceding stanza.

44. Cf. note on stanza 42.

45. Perhaps the remains of two stanzas; the manuscript marks line 4 as the beginning of a new stanza, and after line 4 an added line has been suggested: "She was ever known for evil thoughts." On the other hand, line 1, identical with line 31 of stanza 17, may well be a mere expansion of "Hogni spake," and line 6 may have been introduced, with a slight variation, from line 5 of stanza 38. *Born again*: this looks like a trace of Christian influence (the poem was composed well after the coming of Christianity to Iceland) in the assumption that if Brynhild killed herself she could not be "born again" (cf. concluding prose to *Helgakvitha Hundingsbana II*).

46. The manuscript marks line 3 as beginning a stanza; some {footnote p. 435} editions treat lines 1-2 as a separate stanza, and combine lines 3-4 with lines 1-2 of stanza 47. *Jewel-bearer* (literally "land of jewels"): woman, here Brynhild. *Bond-women*, etc.: in stanza 69 we learn that five female slaves and eight serfs were killed to be burned on the funeral pyre, and thus to follow Sigurth in death.]

On all her wealth | her eyes were gazing,
On the bond-women slain | and the slaughtered slaves.

47. Her byrnie of gold | she donned, and grim
Was her heart ere the point | of her sword had pierced it;
On the pillow at last | her head she laid,
And, wounded, her plan | she pondered o'er.

48. "Hither I will | that my women come
Who gold are fain | from me to get;
Necklaces fashioned | fair to each
Shall I give, and cloth, | and garments bright."

49. Silent were all | as so she spake,
And all together | answer made:
"Slain are enough; | we seek to live,
Not thus thy women | shall honor win."

[47. The manuscript marks line 3, and not line 1, as beginning a stanza, and some editions treat lines 3-4 as a separate stanza, or combine them with stanza 48.

48. Brynhild means, as stanzas 49-51 show, that those of her women who wish to win rewards must be ready to follow her in death. The word translated "women" in line 1 is conjectural, but the general meaning is clear enough.

49. In place of "as so she spake" in line 1 the manuscript has {footnote p. 436}"of their plans they thought," which involves a metrical error.]

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50. Long the woman, | linen-decked, pondered,--
--Young she was,-- | and weighed her words:
"For my sake now | shall none unwilling
Or loath to die | her life lay down.

51. "But little of gems | to gleam on your limbs
Ye then shall find | when forth ye fare
To follow me, | or of Menja's wealth.
. . . . . .

52. "Sit now, Gunnar! | for I shall speak
Of thy bride so fair | and so fain to die;
Thy ship in harbor | home thou hast not,
Although my life | I now have lost.

53. "Thou shalt Guthrun requite | more quick than thou thinkest,
. . . . . .
Though sadly mourns | the maiden wise
Who dwells with the king, | o'er her husband dead.

[51. No gap indicated in the manuscript; many editions place it between lines 3 and 4. *Menja's wealth*: gold; the story of the mill Grotti, whereby the giantesses Menja and Fenja ground gold for King Frothi, is told in the *Grottasongr*.

52. With this stanza begins Brynhild's prophesy of what is to befall Gunnar, Guthrun, Atli, and the many others involved in their fate. Line 3 is a proverbial expression meaning simply "your troubles are not at an end."

53. No gap is indicated in the manuscript; one suggestion for line 2 runs: "Grimhild shall make her | to laugh once {footnote p. 437} more." Gering: suggests a loss of three lines, and joins lines 3-4 with stanza 54.]

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54. "A maid shall then | the mother bear;
Brighter far | than the fairest day
Svanhild shall be, | or the beams of the sun.

55. "Guthrun a noble | husband thou givest,
Yet to many a warrior | woe will she bring,

Not happily wedded | she holds herself;
Her shall Atli | hither seek,
(Buthli's son, | and brother of mine.)

56. "Well I remember | how me ye treated
When ye betrayed me | with treacherous wiles;
. . . . . .
Lost was my joy | as long as I lived.

[54. Probably a line has been lost from this stanza. Grundtvig adds as a new first line: "Her shalt thou find in the hall of Half." Some editions query line 3 as possibly spurious. *Svanhild*: the figure of Svanhild is exceedingly old. The name means "Swan-Maiden-Warrior," applying to just such mixtures of swan-maiden and Valkyrie as appear in the *Völundarkvitha*. Originally part of a separate tradition, Svanhild appears first to have been incorporated in the Jormunrek (Ermanarich) story as the unhappy wife of that monarch, and much later to have been identified as the daughter of Sigurth and Guthrun, thus linking the two sets of legends.

55. Line 2 in the original is almost totally obscure. Line 4 should very possibly precede line 2, while line 5 looks like an unwarranted addition.

56. This stanza probably ought to follow stanza 52, as it refers solely to) the winning of Brynhild by Gunnar and Sigurth. Müllenhoff regards stanzas 53-55 as interpolated. The manuscript indicates no gap after line 3.]

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57. "Oddrun as wife | thou fain wouldst win,
But Atli this | from thee withholds;
Yet in secret tryst | ye twain shall love;
She shall hold thee dear, | as I had done
If kindly fate | to us had fallen.

58. "Ill to thee | shall Atli bring,
When he casts thee down | in the den of snakes.

59. "But soon thereafter | Atli too
His life, methinks, | as thou shalt lose,
(His fortune lose | and the lives of his sons;)
Him shall Guthrun, | grim of heart,
With the biting blade | in his bed destroy.

60. "It would better beseem | thy sister fair

[57. Stanzas 57-58 seem to be the remains of two stanzas, but the *Volsungasaga* paraphrase follows closely the form here given. Line 3 may well be spurious; line 5 has likewise been questioned. *Oddrun*: this sister of Atli and Brynhild, known mainly through the *Oddrunargratr*, is a purely northern addition to the cycle, and apparently one of a relatively late date. She figures solely by reason of her love affair with Gunnar.

58. Possibly two lines have been lost; many editions combine the two remaining lines with lines 1-3 of stanza 59. Concerning the manner of Gunnar's death cf. *Drap Niflunga*.

59. Line 3 may well be spurious, as it is largely repetition. The manuscript has "sofa" ("sleep") in place of "sona" ("sons"), but the *Volsungasaga* paraphrase says clearly "sons." The slaying of Atli by Guthrun in revenge for his killing of her brothers is told in the two Atli lays. The manuscript marks line 4 as the beginning of a new stanza, and some editions make a separate stanza out of lines 4-5, or else combine them with stanza 60.

60. *To follow in death*: this phrase is not in *Regius*, but is {footnote p. 439} included in late paper manuscripts, and has been added in most editions.]

{p. 439}

To follow her husband | first in death,
If counsel good | to her were given,
Or a heart akin | to mine she had.

61. "Slowly I speak,-- | but for my sake
Her life, methinks, | she shall not lose;
She shall wander over | the tossing waves,
To where Jonak rules | his father's realm.

62. "Sons to him | she soon shall bear,
Heirs therewith | of Jonak's wealth;
But Svanhild far | away is sent,
The child she bore | to Sigurth brave.

63. "Bikki's word | her death shall be,
For dreadful the wrath | of Jormunrek;
So slain is all | of Sigurth's race,
And greater the woe | of Guthrun grows.

[61. *Jonak*: this king, known only through the *Hamthesmol* and the stories which, like this one, are based thereon, is another purely northern addition to the legend. The name is apparently of Slavic origin. He appears solely as Guthrun's third husband and the father of Hamther, Sorli, and Erp (cf. introductory prose to *Guthrunarhvot*).

62. *Svanhild*: cf. stanza 54 and note.

63. *Bikki*: Svanhild is married to the aged Jormunrek (Ermanarich), but Eikki, one of his followers, suggests that she is unduly intimate with Jormunrek's son, Randver. Thereupon Jormunrek has Randver hanged, and Svanhild torn to pieces by wild horses. Ermanarich's cruelty and his barbarous slaying of his wife and son were familiar traditions long before they be {footnote p. 440} came in any way connected with the Sigurth cycle (cf. introductory note to *Gripisspo*).]

{p. 440}

64. "Yet one boon | I beg of thee,
The last of boons | in my life it is:
Let the pyre be built | so broad in the field
That room for us all | will ample be,
(For us who slain | with Sigurth are.)

65. "With shields and carpets | cover the pyre,
. . . . . .
Shrouds full fair, | and fallen slaves,
And besides the Hunnish | hero burn me.

66. "Besides the Hunnish | hero there
Slaves shall burn, | full bravely decked,
Two at his head | and two at his feet,
A brace of hounds | and a pair of hawks,
For so shall all | be seemly done.

67. "Let between us | lie once more

[64. Line 5 is very probably spurious.

65. The manuscript indicates no gap; a suggested addition runs "Gold let there be, and jewels bright." *Fallen slaves*: cf. stanzas 66 and 69. *Hunnish hero*: cf. stanza 4 and note.

66. In place of lines 3-4 the manuscript has one line "Two at his head, and a pair of hawks"; the addition is made from the *Volsungasaga* paraphrase. The burning or burying of slaves or beasts to accompany their masters in death was a general custom in the North. The number of slaves indicated in this stanza does not tally with the one given in stanza 69, wherefore Vigfusson rejects most of this stanza.]

{p. 441}

The steel so keen, | as so it lay
When both within | one bed we were,
And wedded mates | by men were called.

68. "The door of the hall | shall strike not the heel
Of the hero fair | with flashing rings,
If hence my following | goes with him;
Not mean our faring | forth shall be.

69. "Bond-women five | shall follow him,
And eight of my thralls, | well-born are they,
Children with me, | and mine they were
As gifts that Buthli | his daughter gave.

70. "Much have I told thee, | and more would say
If fate more space | for speech had given;

My voice grows weak, | my wounds are swelling;
Truth I have said, | and so I die."

[67. Cf. *Gripisspo*, 41 and note. After line I the manuscript adds the phrase "bright, ring-decked," referring to the sword, but it is metrically impossible, and many editions omit it.

68. *The door*: The gate of Hel's domain, like that of Mengloth's house (cf. *Svipdagsmol*, 26 and note), closes so fast as to catch any one attempting to pass through. Apparently the poet here assumes that the gate of Valhall does likewise, but that it will be kept open for Sigurth's retinue.

69. Cf. stanza 66.]